

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3467

INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR CSCE UR US

SUBJECT: MUKACHEVO CEMETERY

REF: (A) STATE 014267, (B) 76 STATE 294068, (C) 76 MOSCOW 19975
(AND PREVIOUS)

1. POL COUNSELOR AND EMBOFF CALLED JAN 25 ON MFA
CONSULAR ADMINISTRATION DEPUTY CHIEF REZNICHENKO TO
DISCUSS JAN 30 ARRIVAL IN MOSCOW OF MUKACHEVO ASSOCIATION
GROUP. POL COUNSELOR OBSERVED THAT WE WERE PLEASED TO
LEARN THAT SOVIET AUTHORITIES HAD ISSUED VISAS AND TAKE
IT AS INDICATION THAT THEY WERE WILLING TO RECEIVE GROUP
AND DISCUSS STATUS OF CEMETERY (WHILE NOTING THAT WE
HAD NOT RECEIVED AS YET A RESPONSE TO OUR NOTE OF DEC 8,
REF C).

2. REZNICHENKO INDICATED, APROPO ITINERARY OF GROUP,
THAT TRIP WAS BOOKED THROUGH INTOURIST WHICH SCHEDULED
TRIP TO MOSCOW-KIEV-UZHGOROD. HE LEFT PROSPECT OF
VISIT TO MUKACHEVO IN THE AIR, NOTING THAT IT IS LOCATED
IN CLOSED AREA. SPEAKING UNOFFICIALLY, HE STATED THAT
CONDITION OF CEMETERY REMAINS UNCHANGED SINCE END OF
LAST YEAR. HE ADDED THAT, TO HIS KNOWLEDGE, NONE OF
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THE JEWISH GROUPS IN THE USSR HAD RAISED ISSUE OF MUKACHEVO
CEMETERY. HE SUGGESTED THAT PRINCIPAL POINT OF CONTACT
FOR MUKACHEVO GROUP IN MOSCOW WOULD BE THE STATE
COMMITTEE FOR RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS, AN ORGANIZATION, HE
NOTED, WHICH IS WELL KNOWN TO RABBI SCHNEIER. ACCORDING
TO REZNICHENKO, GROUP WOULD ALSO DEAL WITH EQUIVALENT
UKRAINIAN STATE COMMITTEE FOR RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS IN KIEV.

HE STATED THAT UKRAINIAN COMMITTEE HAD BEEN INFORMED OF GROUP'S ARRIVAL, ALSO THAT COPY OF EMBASSY'S NOTE OF DECEMBER 8 AND BEEN SENT TO MUKACHEVO CITY OFFICIALS WHO, AFTER ALL, ARE THE ONES WITH DIRECT COMPETENCE OVER CEMETERY.

3. AS OF LATE AFTERNOON JAN 25, WE WERE NOT ABLE TO CONTACT FOREIGN SECTION OF STATE COMMITTEE FOR RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS TO CONFIRM COMMITTEE'S READINESS TO RECEIVE GROUP, ALTHOUGH WE DO NOT EXPECT ANY PROBLEMS THERE. EMBASSY CONTACT FOR MUKACHEVO GROUP WILL BE IGOR BELOUSOVITCH, WHOSE HOME TELEPHONE IS 243-2687. WE WILL ALSO ALERT KAP ABOUT PRESENCE OF MUKACHEVO GROUP IN KIEV. HOWEVER, KAP IS OF COURSE NOT IN POSITION TO ACT OFFICIALLY ON BEHALF OF GROUP AND WILL BE ABLE TO PROVIDE ONLY INFORMAL UNOFFICIAL ASSISTANCE AND ADVICE.

4. AMBASSADOR TOON WILL BE PLEASED TO MEET WITH RABBI SCHNEIER AT MUTUALLY CONVENIENT TIME FEB 1 OR 2.

5. COMMENT: WHILE REZNICHENKO WAS CORDIAL AND WELL INFORMED IN DISCUSSING MUKACHEVO GROUP VISIT, HE CONTINUED PREVIOUS MFA TENDENCY TO AVOID DISCUSSING FUTURE STATUS OF CEMETERY AND TO REFER ONLY TO EXHUMATION AS MAIN SUBJECT OF CONCERN TO GROUP. HIS PASSING REFERENCE TO MUKACHEVO AS CLOSED AREA LEAVES UNCERTAIN PROSPECT OF GROUP ACTUALLY GETTING THERE. TOON

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Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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